Focus pushes marriage amendment

Definition would apply only to male-female relationships

MARRIAGE AMENDMENTS

According to The Heritage Foundation, 17 states have marriage protection amendments in their constitutions, including 13 approved in 2004.

There are proposed constitutional amendments in another 11 states, not including Colorado, according to the foundation's Web site, www.heritage.org/Research/Family/Marriage50States.cfm.

MORE ONLINE Speak up! Share your thoughts on the gay marriage debate at **www.gazette.com.**

By PAUL ASAY
THE GAZETTE

Focus on the Family hopes to get a proposal for a constitutional amendment that defines marriage on the 2006 Colorado election ballot. Opponents already are planning rebuttals.

"Anticipating that it will occur is half the battle," said Ellie Collinson, executive director for the local civil-rights group Citizens Project.

The proposed amendment would define marriage as being exclusively between a man and woman. Focus has been one of the nation's leading supporters of such amendments and supports a similar national amendment.

The same-sex marriage debate has served as a rallying cry for many Christians. Some said the issue drove voters to the polls in record numbers in 2004 and helped President Bush win re-election.

Thirteen states passed amendments defining marriage last fall, according to The Heritage Foundation Web site.

"I think the election of 2004 brought out thousands and thousands of Christian voters to defend marriage," said Tom Minnery, Focus' vice president of government and public policy. "And they had some success. They're highly energized

SEE MARRIAGE • PAGE 6

rado Springs City Clerk's office had its drawing Friday to determine the positions of council candidates on the April 5 ballot.

Councilman Scott Hente was placed above Al Brody in the District 1 race and Councilwoman Margaret Radford over Tony Carpenter in District 4. District 2 Councilman Darryl Glenn and District 3 Councilman Jerry Heimlicher are unopposed.

ON THE STUMP

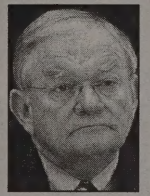
Despite incumbents getting a leg up — political theory holds the first name on the ballot gets a few extra votes — first-time candidate Brody left without bitterness.

"I'm impressed by the process. I even liked the box," he said.

City Clerk Kathryn Young placed the candidates' names into a wooden voting box estimated to be about a century old.

GRAND OLD COUNCIL

The council races might be nonpartisan, but the four incumbents seeking re-election let their political colors fly anyway at last week-



Jerry Heimlicher: Top goal is increasing tourism to Springs.

more muted, preferring to discuss council issues.

Radford told the crowd most of her big issues will be ones held dearly by social conservatives in the party. She spoke of having ended a policy that allowed elective abortions at Memorial Hospital and touted her three votes against same-sex benefits.

LISTEN TO ME

No candidate wants an opponent, but Heimlicher is upset at one aspect of being unopposed this week: He won't have as big a stage to discuss his platform.

So he made sure to tell it to Stump in a telephone interview.

His top goal for his first full term — Heimlicher was elected to fill a vacant seat in 2003 — is increasing tourism to Colorado Springs. He also would like to expand air service to the city, bring a proposed 9/11 memorial here, work on keeping jobs for young people and explore what effect growth is having on the town.

Child molester violated probation

By R. SCOTT RAPPOLD
THE GAZETTE

A Colorado man wanted for a probation violation was arrested Friday in Nicaragua, where he was selling real estate, according to federal officials.

It was the second time in two years Steven Larry Wolf, 40, had gone to Granada, Nicaragua, in violation of his probation, according to the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, which negotiated his arrest by local police.

He was expelled from the country and is being brought 2,100 miles back to Park County.

Wolf pleaded guilty in 1994 to child molestation and was sentenced to 90 days in jail and eight years of probation, which was extended by two years in 2003.

He was arrested last February in Nicaragua and returned to Colorado, where he spent 10 months in the Park County Jail. On his release in December, he was sentenced to five more years of probation and promptly fled the country again.

Federal officials agreed to look for Wolf when contacted by the Park County Sheriff's Office, though he was only wanted on a probation violation.

"If local law enforcement calls us and says 'We want to pursue something,' we'll work on it," said Ed Moreno, the agent in charge of the diplomatic security bureau's Miami office.

Nicaraguan police arrested Wolf for being in the country illegally, Moreno said, and handed him over to federal agents.

Wolf was in Miami on Friday, awaiting return to Colorado, which Moreno said could take several days.

MARRIAGE: Group calls Focus 'toxic'

FROM PAGE 1

to make an impact in 2006."

Opponents aren't surprised there's a move to put an amendment on the Colorado ballot.

"Certainly when we saw what happened (in the 2004 elections), we knew Colorado wouldn't be far away," said Julie Tolleson, spokeswoman for Equal Rights Colorado.

The gay lobbying group based in Denver is developing strategies to defeat the initiative, and Tolleson said the battle will be costly.

Their effort will likely involve more liberal churches, such as Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community Church. The church, led by the Rev. Nori Rost, is made up predominantly of homosexual believers.

"Certainly we would speak out against this amendment in whatever way is appropriate at that time," Rost said.

Her church will join the national gay-faith group Soulforce for a demonstration May 1 in front of Focus on the Family, which will be declared a "toxic religion zone" by the group.

Focus officials say they don't plan to head the drive to put the proposal on the ballot and hope churches will push the initiative.

"I'm happy that (this issue) is coming up now," said the Rev. Ted Haggard, senior pastor for the 11,000-member New Life Church in Colorado Springs. "I don't know how much leadership (New Life will provide), but we'll certainly be supportive. We'll be active."

Before the measure gets on the ballot, its wording will be scrutinized by the Colorado Secretary of State's Office. Supporters will then have to collect the signatures of 67,829 registered voters.

SERVICES

Laura E. Amitrani
Services, noon March 12, Memorial Gardens Chapel.

Milton W. Banks
Memorial services, 2 p.m. Feb. 21, Limon Gym, Eighth St., Limon. Spartan Services.

LaWanda D. Brown
Services, 2 p.m. today, Shrine of Remembrance, "America the Beautiful," Chapel of Roses. A reception to follow services at Colorado Springs Country Club, 3333 Templeton Gap Road. Entombment, Shrine of Remembrance Mausoleum, Gate of Heaven.

Michael T. Cockrum
Services, 11 a.m. today, Austin Bluffs Community Church, 5090 Austin Bluffs Parkway. Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Michael Steven Davis
Graveside services, 10 a.m. today, Jarosa Cemetery, Gulnare. Evergreen Funeral Home.

Robert A. Dunn
Services, 4 p.m. today, Broadmoor Community Church, 315 Lake Ave. All Veterans Burial and Cremation.

Anastasija Eglitis
Celebration of Life, 3 p.m. Sunday, Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Paul Robert Elder
Wake Celebration, 1 p.m. Feb. 19, SouthSide Johnny's 528 S. Tejon St. Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Helen Herrlich
Services, 2 p.m. Feb. 19, Heritage Baptist Church, 4808 Palmer Park Blvd. Evergreen Funeral Home.

Vicki Lynn Hlavacek
Services, 11 a.m. today, Evergreen Funeral Home Chapel. Burial, Evergreen Cemetery.

Eleanor J. Hunt
Memorial services, 10 a.m. Wednesday, Cor-

Elwyn Leroy Nash
Services, 11 a.m. today, Pulpit Rock Church, 301 Austin Bluffs Parkway. Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Kerri L. Ohmes
Memorial services, 2 p.m. today, Dove-Witt Family Mortuary, Fountain.

Alvin L. Quickley
Memorial services, 12:30 p.m. today, New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, 5485 Alegre Circle, Fountain. Cappadona's Alternative Funeral Services.

Nikki Rawlings
Memorial services, 4:30 p.m. today, 3005 DeCortez St. Shrine of Remembrance Funeral Home.

Curtis Lester Salisbury
Services, 1 p.m. today, Nolan Funeral Home.

George C. Shannon Jr.
Visitation, 1 to 3 p.m., with services to follow at 3 p.m. Monday, Dove-Witt Family Mortuary, Fountain. Graveside services, 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Fort Logan National Cemetery, Area C.

Gayle D. Smith
Memorial services, 1:30 p.m. Feb. 20, Evergreen Funeral Home.

Mildred Ellen Smith
Services, 10 a.m. Monday, Friendship Baptist Church, 633 E. Dale St. Graveside services, 1 p.m. Tuesday, Fort Logan National Cemetery. Evergreen Funeral Home.

Faustino Larry Soliz
Services, noon today, Victory Outreach, 2475 E. Pikes Peak Ave. A reception to follow services at 2503 Carlsbad Drive. Guerra Gutierrez Funeral Home.

Kenneth P. Tevebaugh
Memorial services, 10 a.m. today, Shrine of Remembrance "America the Beautiful" Chapel of Roses. Burial, Evergreen Come-